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# News Release

## **Statement by Chief of Police Stephen Monticelli**

**July 30, 2012**

The following statement was issued today by Chief of Police Stephen Monticelli:

I am pleased that the case involving Officer Jonathan Snoddy has been resolved by the courts. I understand that this has been a painful issue for all of us, both people in the community and within our own department. It also has been a significant learning experience. And while it is closed in the courts, I want everyone to know that the Harrisonburg Police Department has been—and will continue—working to improve how we deal with matters of this nature.

I want to report to the community what we are doing to address issues that came to light. Please keep in mind that the type of situation that Officer Snoddy faced occurs very rarely, so none of our patrol officers has a wealth of experience to fall back on. So we have focused our efforts in recent months on three areas:

- **Policies and guidelines.** We recognize that our policies and guidelines for dealing with animal cases need to be improved. They have been thoroughly reviewed and are being revised so they offer clear direction for all our officers.
- **Training.** When our policies for dealing with injured animals have been finalized all officers will be thoroughly trained so they understand them and can respond appropriately when their services are requested by our citizens.
- **Resources.** Clearly, there are in our community organizations and resources that are more knowledgeable and better equipped to deal with injured animal cases. The Harrisonburg Police Department is reaching out to them to

establish a collaborative effort aimed at improving training, response and resolution of injured animal cases.

Recognizing that mistakes have been made, I want to assure the community that their police department is fully committed to providing the highest level of professional public safety service and that the progress I am reporting today represents our continuing commitment to that goal.

Finally, I want to say that Officer Snoddy is a valued member of the Harrisonburg Police Department. He has been a good public servant and continues to serve this community well. He has my trust and confidence as we move beyond this incident.

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